

The Library Assistant :

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ANNOUNCEMENTS.

A meeting of the L.A.A. has been arranged at Watford for Wednesday, May 24th.

Members and friends intending to be present are particularly requested to communicate with Mr. Ernest Luke, F.L.A., Public Library, Plumstead High Street, S.E.18, not later than Saturday, May 20th, in order that tickets at reduced rates may be obtained for them (3/2 return, Euston—Watford West). Leave Euston 2.20 p.m.; arrive Willesden Junction 2.31 p.m.; arrive Watford High Street 3.8 p.m. Change at Willesden on the Bakerloo Tube.

On arrival at Watford High Street, members must change and take the 3.20 p.m. train to Watford West (four minutes' run), where the party will be met by members of the Library Staff.

A visit will then be made to the works of the Sun Engraving Co., Ltd. (five minutes' walk from the station). The firm have very kindly invited the members to tea at the conclusion of the visit. The Sun Engraving Works are the largest process printing works in England, and most of the work

done there is in colour. The Association is to be congratulated on securing permission to visit such an important and excellently arranged concern. Mr. A. C. Symons, the works manager, has kindly offered to place at our disposal experts in charge of the different sections, so that visitors can inspect the various processes in small parties.

Leaving the works about 6 p.m., the party, weather and time permitting, will walk to the Public Library via the beautiful Cassiobury Park. On arrival at the Library the various departments may be inspected. At 7.30 p.m. Mr. H. Nicholson, M.A. (Cantab.), head master, Watford Grammar School, chairman of the Modern Languages Association, etc., will read a paper on "The Faust Legend." Light refreshments will be served at the conclusion of the paper.

A through train leaves Watford Junction for Euston at 9.24 p.m. There is a fifteen minutes' service on the Bakerloo system from Watford, the High Street Station being only six minutes' walk from the Library.

Arrangements for the Annual Meeting on Wednesday, June 28th, at the London Day Training College, are in hand.

Election of Officers and Council for 1922-23.—Nominations are invited for the offices of President (a Provincial), Vice-President (a Londoner), Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Secretary, and for ten London and ten Provincial Councillors. They should be forwarded to the Honorary Secretary, Public Library, Bancroft Road, Mile End, E.1, in time to reach him not later than Tuesday, 16th May.

Annual Meeting: Notices of Motion, etc.—Notices of motion to be submitted to the Annual Meeting must reach the Honorary Secretary not later than Tuesday, 16th May. At the May Meeting two auditors will be elected to audit the Association's accounts for the year 1921-22. Nominations must reach the Honorary Secretary not later than Tuesday, 23rd May.

Council and Other Meetings.—The joint conference on the reconstruction proposals will be held on Wednesday, 10th May, at 3.30 p.m., and a special Council meeting will be held on the same day at 7 p.m.

The ordinary monthly Council meeting will be held on Wednesday, 17th May, at 7 p.m., at the National Library for the Blind.

EDITORIAL

Mr. J. F. Hogg.—It is with very deep regret that we have to announce that Mr. J. F. Hogg feels compelled to relinquish the office of Honorary Treasurer to the Association, owing to the fact that he no longer finds it possible to devote the necessary time to the duties of the office. In 1917, when Mr. W. G. Chambers joined the Army, Mr. Hogg came forward and undertook to manage the financial affairs of the Association at the most critical time in its history. There is no doubt whatever that the sound financial condition of the L.A.A. to-day is due entirely to Mr. Hogg's wise guidance and management during the past five years. In addition to this work, Mr. Hogg has been a valued member of the Council for very many years past, but as there will no doubt be other opportunities of referring to Mr. Hogg's ungrudging service, let it suffice to say that the present Council holds him in such esteem that it has been unanimously resolved to confer on him the highest honour the Association can bestow, namely, the Honorary Fellowship.

Children's Libraries.—It is interesting to learn that the fifteen children's rooms at Manchester are being gradually reorganised on modern "open" lines. Besides the ordinary work of book issuing, there are to be story hours, lectures, etc.

Marylebone.—After all, there is *not* to be a Public Library at Marylebone yet, the Borough Council having rejected the recommendation of the Libraries Committee to open temporary premises. Having gone so far, it is to be hoped that Marylebone will soon see the wisdom of providing its residents with a library.

The Whitsuntide Trip to Holland.—The Councils of the Library Association and of the Library Assistants' Association have accepted the invitation of the Dutch Library Association to make an Excursion to the cities of Holland at Whitsuntide. It is hoped that members of the two Associations and their friends will join to make this most interesting and enjoyable visit a success.

Programme: The party will leave Fenchurch Street on Saturday, 3rd June, and proceed by the Batavier Steamship Line from Tilbury to Rotterdam.

The party will be received at Rotterdam by members of the Dutch Committee.

Visits will be paid to the Public Libraries of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Delft, the Hague, Haarlem, Bussum, Hilversum, and

Utrecht; the library of the Commercial High School, Rotterdam, the Palace of Peace at the Hague, and the Jewish Library and the Museum at Amsterdam.

There will be visits to Marken and Volendam.

The Dutch Committee are kindly arranging for travel, hotel accommodation, meals, etc.

The return will be made by the afternoon boat from Rotterdam, and Fenchurch Street will be reached early Saturday morning, 19th June.

Cost: (1) The total cost of the Excursion, including first class saloon to and from England, travel, hotel and meals in Holland, will be £13 5s.; or

(2) Including second class saloon to and from England and travel, etc., £11 5s.

Passports and Visas: Members must hold a British passport, which must be visaed for Holland. The cost of the passport is 7s. 6d., and the cost of the visa 7s. 6d.

Applications, together with a deposit of £1 5s., should reach Mr. W. C. Berwick Sayers on or before May 10th.

The Roll of Honour.—The work of editing and compiling the professional Roll of Honour is now in progress, and this last appeal is made to those who have not yet sent in a return of their service with the Forces to do so without delay. The particulars should be sent to Captain E. C. Kyte, Stapley House, Bloomsbury Square, W.C. Help in procuring full information relating to those who fell is particularly desired.

Willesden.—The Kensal Rise Branch of the Willesden Public Libraries has been reorganized on the open-access system, and it is reported that the innovation is a great success. For the use of boys and girls leaving school an interesting brochure of advice and guidance has been prepared, with a view to pointing out to these young people the value of the public libraries to them in after school life.

Holidays.—It will be remembered that an attempt was made last year to compile a Register of Holiday Addresses for the exclusive use of our members. A number of addresses are now available, but we shall be glad if readers will support the idea by sending to the Honorary Editor any other addresses that they are able to recommend.

Examinations.—By the time this number appears the professional examinations will be close at hand. We take this opportunity therefore of wishing those of our readers who may be candidates, the best of luck.

St. Pancras.—We have received a copy of the Annual Report of the St. Pancras Public Libraries, and are gratified to learn from

it that public interest in the libraries has increased very considerably during the year, partly due no doubt to the opening of a Branch at Camden Town. Now that the St. Pancras Council has taken this short step forward, we hope that it will be encouraged at the earliest opportunity to develop the library system into one worthy of the borough.

Impotence.—If it shows nothing else, the editorial in *The Library Association Record* for April, headed "Some Examples and a Moral," certainly reveals the absolute helplessness of the profession to secure a proper recognition of its position in the educational world. The examples cited are those of Tunbridge Wells, to which we referred in our last issue, Grantham, to which we refer elsewhere, and Chesterfield, where "the son of a local Alderman and by occupation a free-lance journalist" has been appointed librarian at the paltry salary of £250 a year. A part of the editorial is so entirely in accord with our own views that we take the liberty of quoting it. "If for a moment we ignore the fact that some librarians intensely refuse to approach the Trade Union idea, it remains obvious that certain forms of insurance are indicated for our future protection. One is registration . . . the other is recognition, by the government, by municipal authorities and by the nation at large, of the place actually to be taken by the public library when the new educational ideals at length gain their day."

David Copperfield's Library.—It is doubtful whether any of our professional meetings has included so many distinguished people as did that held at David Copperfield's Library on Wednesday, 26th April. The first part of the proceedings was held in the St. Pancras Town Hall, where His Excellency the French Ambassador presented to the library on behalf of the French Republic a fine collection of French children's books to the value of 2,000 francs.

Brief speeches were also made by the Rev. J. Brett Langstaff (the president of the Children's Libraries Movement), who referred to the large number of English librarians and assistants present on this occasion, by Mr. J. D. Stewart (President of the L.A.), who congratulated Mr. Langstaff and his supporters on what they had accomplished, and suggested that the St. Pancras Borough Council should now take over the library, by Captain Kyte (Secretary of the L.A.), who offered the Association's best wishes for the success of the library, the methods of which were being watched with the keenest interest by librarians.

The American Library Association, which has taken a great interest in the foundation of the David Copperfield Library, sent cordial greetings by Miss Ewins.

Mr. Alfred Noyes delighted the company by reciting his own poem, which had been specially written in honour of the library. Mr. Pett Ridge followed with a characteristic little speech on Dickens' associations with Somers Town.

The first part of the programme was concluded with a recital by Mr. Stanley Leverton, of Bob Sawyer's Party, from "Pickwick," which was greatly appreciated by those present.

After tea, a visit was paid to the library at 13, Johnson Street, close by, which, as our readers are no doubt aware, is the small house in which Dickens lived in the old blacking-factory days. We had to make our way through a cordon of police who were busily engaged in regulating the queue of visitors to the historic house. Inside, we found that four rooms (very small) had been converted to the purpose of the library, the whole arrangement of which is completely different from our common ideas of a children's library. The outstanding feature is that it has no staff of trained assistants, the whole of the routine work being carried out by the children themselves, who are provided with quaint looking overalls for the purpose. If carried out on a larger scale, some of the features of the library are distinctly worth copying. For example, there is a "Silence Room" for the use of the older children, into which only those who desire to read quietly are allowed to enter. In this room, by the way, we were interested to see the three panels by Leslie Brooke representing the children of Canada, Russia and India, which had been presented by the staff of the forty children's libraries in New York.

Then again, there was the gaily decorated "fairy dungeon," in which baby children left in charge of their elder brothers and sisters are allowed to play and "read" pictures. The main reading room is upstairs, and in some respects is very similar to the ordinary children's reading room. No books, by the way, are issued for home reading.

Those who had the opportunity of seeing the library thoroughly enjoyed it, and we can only say that we hope, after such a send-off, that it will have a useful future before it. A word of praise is due to Mr. Langstaff for his untiring energies on its behalf, without which it would never have come into being.

An Elastic Term.—There are one or two points in F. B.'s Current View on Library Salaries in the *L.A.R.* for April to which we should like to refer, although with the main tenor of the note we must perforce be in agreement. In the first place we should like to know what is exactly meant by the term "junior assistant." It is a most elastic one, and we have heard of so-called juniors who have very responsible duties to perform, sometimes even including the charge of a whole building. It is high time that some standard

of nomenclature was adopted; at present there is a good deal of confusion in the use of titles. The second point is more serious, because F. B.'s note says that Mr. Elliott has omitted to mention that "women applicants were invited." We do not see that this should make the slightest difference to the point at issue; indeed, we say unhesitatingly that it is the *position* that is under discussion, not the sex of the holder.

The L.A.A. at the Play.—The carrying out of the idea that the L.A.A. should attend a London theatre in a body proved a distinct success, and we hope that the experiment may be repeated in the near future. It was fitting that the plays chosen should be by two of our foremost modern writers, *viz.*, Galsworthy's "Loyalties" and Barrie's "Shall We Join the Ladies?"

Salaries.—The Council of the L.A.A. has had under consideration the Scale of Salaries to which we referred in our March issue, and has made certain specific recommendations to N.A.L.G.O. which will be distinctly to the advantage of assistants if carried into effect. The Council has in mind the time when either by the continued fall in the cost of living or through the continuance of the cry for economy at any cost, the Bonus will disappear. Indeed, the Council definitely suggests that when the cost of living falls to 30 points above the pre-war figures the salary shall become stabilised and consolidated. Moreover, as we have pointed out again and again, unless great vigilance is exercised, there is a grave danger of library workers finding themselves just as badly paid as they were in the old days, for the simple reason that authorities persist in comparing the present salaries with those then paid, which is not at all fair because, much as they may have wished to do so, library authorities simply *could* not adequately remunerate their staffs. The Council is particularly insistent that men and women shall be paid at equal rates for equal services given.

Grantham and Trades Unionism!—We are pleased to hear of the opening of a Public Library and Reading Room at Grantham, even if the building is only of a temporary nature. It is the achievement of a long cherished aim, we know, and one that has had many set-backs. We agree with the Mayor that such an institution will be a great benefit and an acquisition to the town, and second the statement that "for those seeking further enlightenment the library is a great advantage."

The librarian appointed is the Rev. W. G. Summers; and, although we have no wish to be personal, we consider that certain statements made previously by this gentleman should not pass by without some comment. At the annual meeting of the Grantham Congregational Church a resolution was passed expressing regret

at the resignation of the pastor, the Rev. W. G. Summers, and congratulating him on his appointment as librarian of the Grantham Public Library. In his reply, Mr. Summers said that he had always held that eight to ten years represented the limit of any minister's effective work in any church, and he began to want a change. The town, he added, wanted a librarian, and not a girl to hand out books, and it was not in a position to pay a *trades union librarian*.

The italics are ours. Considerably more might be said about the appointment of a minister (whether a "trades union minister" or otherwise) to such a position, and if, as stated, the "town wanted a librarian," why didn't it insist on having one—even a librarian who was not a "trades union" man or woman?—*W. A. B.*

ASSISTING THE READER.

By MISS D. N. SALMON,

Hackney Public Libraries.

"Assisting the Reader" seems to me to be a rather ambitious title for a five-minute paper, covering, as it does, the whole field of librarianship. Everything we do is, directly or indirectly, for the assistance of readers. The librarian in his judicious selection of books is helping readers to the right kind of literature. When we classify or catalogue we do so to aid readers in their search for books, and all extension work, such as lectures, preparation of book-lists, lists of additions and readers' bulletins are all to the same end. I propose to confine this paper to the personal element in the work—the actual personal assistance which the staff can give to readers.

In a lending department much can be done by explaining the use of the catalogue, directing borrowers to the location of books, and occasionally, when asked to do so, by recommending books. If the library is an open-access one, and readers can actually handle the books, there is less need for assistance, and the reader may do better by choosing for himself. A librarian's literary taste is not infallible just because he is a librarian; what he has to do is to provide the books and see that those provided are of the best, and the reader will do the rest. I do not mean to say that the librarian should not attempt to guide the readers along the right road, especially when he is asked for advice, but I do think that books are the

best teachers. "Learn, but learn from the learned," said Cato, and I think that a very good motto.

In the reference department the assistant who is willing to do so, will find endless opportunities for assisting the reader, or, more correctly, the "enquirer." The art of using reference books is professional knowledge which requires years of continual experience to acquire. It is not, therefore, surprising that the majority of readers in a public library have very little idea which books to consult for certain information. One who is not used to the handling of books will sometimes search for hours, and waste much time and temper in the process, for information that a skilled assistant can find in five minutes. For instance, the average reader does not know that the "Dictionary of National Biography" deals exclusively with deceased British notables; he has probably never heard of the "Subject Index" to periodicals, and would not think of using the index to the "Encyclopædia Britannica." Of course, the main guide to the books is the catalogue, but, however admirably compiled and profusely annotated it may be, it cannot give complete detailed and analytical information about the insides of books.

So in the reference department the assistant with a knowledge of the use of books can be of great assistance to the reader. He can save him much time and trouble, and at the same time derive a great amount of satisfaction and interest from it himself. The work is fascinating and absorbing. Enquiries are numerous and varied, and have a very wide range, touching upon every conceivable subject. To those of us who realise our limitations this sounds rather appalling, but, of course, we do not have to know all these things. In fact, sometimes, better information is procured on a subject about which we know nothing than upon one about which we know a good deal.

The answers given must be concise and to the point, and, as far as possible, the information shown to the enquirer in print. This applies especially to legal and medical queries. Great caution should be exercised in giving legal advice which may be acted upon and possibly involve the assistant who gave it. Give enquirers the books by all means, but let them search out the information for themselves.

Discretion in answering queries is essential. It is as bad to give too much information as to give too little, and we must not impose our services upon a reader who wishes to be left to himself, or assume ignorance of the knowledge of the use of books. If the reader wants our help he will probably ask for it.

In addition to his knowledge of books, I should say that the assistant must have a knowledge of people. Enquirers range much in the same way as enquiries, and each must be dealt with as the circumstances suggest. Some are too shy to ask for information, and must be approached in a very tactful manner, so that they are not frightened away. Others are suspicious, and need to be carefully questioned before they will tell exactly what they want to know, because it is important to know exactly what *is* wanted. It is hopeless to set out to look for something when you are not sure what you are looking for. Some are ignorant ; some learned ; some haughty ; some meek, and so on. One can tell by the way an enquirer approaches to which category he belongs. One mentally classifies enquiries in order to know which books to consult ; in the same way enquirers must be classified and dealt with accordingly.

Finally, the assistant must be polite and obliging, resourceful, intelligent and sympathetic, with plenty of good common-sense. He must be sure of his information, and look as if he knows what he is talking about. He must have confidence in himself, and the reader will have confidence in him. If he says in a half-hearted way, "I think so-and-so," the reader will not rely on his information, but will go elsewhere for confirmation.

ASSISTING READERS.

By MISS L. M. BURDEN, *Bethnal Green.*

Having provided the books, the first duty of the librarian and his assistants is to help readers to use those books to the best advantage. Sound education, common-sense, and civility are the most important factors in aiding readers.

It is obvious that a well-informed staff must be of greater value to the public than one comprised of automatic book-fetching and stamping machines, for nothing is more annoying to a borrower when asking a question than to be met with a vacant expression. It is also imperative that assistants should do their best to acquire the polite affability which breaks down many of the barriers so noticeable in modern institutions. Overbearing assistants can render a public library more unpopular than almost anything else ; a studied politeness costs nothing, while its good effects are far-reaching.

A little knowledge is said to be a dangerous thing, but to know something about everything rather than everything about something is one of the golden rules of librarianship. This is proved more especially in open-access libraries, where staff and public are brought into direct communication, and the professional knowledge of the assistant is in greater demand and given a wider scope than in the closed libraries.

All kinds of people have to be catered for, which means that different dispositions have to be dealt with. There are quarrelsome people who will find fault with everything that tends to method; these need careful tactics, and it is only by using diplomacy that an awkward interview may be terminated pleasantly. Patience is required for an unintelligent enquirer, while a little consideration and help will make a timid person feel quite at ease.

It is sometimes difficult to discern between those who are wandering aimlessly about, and do not know what they want, and those who wish to find out for themselves the nature and extent of the contents of the building; therefore tact is necessary in approaching confused or bewildered borrowers.

To new borrowers an explanation of the principles of the catalogue and the use of the subject index is due, and in an open-access library the arrangement and classification of the books. At the same time they should be invited to enquire at all times for what they fail to find for themselves.

Despite these efforts, one sometimes wonders if the notices that are displayed are really as useful as is generally supposed. For instance, the other day a borrower said that he had been waiting for three months for the second volume of a book to be put on the shelves; he was told that the volume had been stored in another room owing to lack of accommodation in that department. This information was merely confirming the many notices which were displayed to that effect. Unfortunately, this is one of the many incidents which occur in the daily life of every library assistant, and although utopian ideas suggest that every reader should have the assistant's full attention I think you will agree that with 1,000 and even more borrowers to be attended to daily this would be impossible.

The reference department affords even more opportunities in the way of helping students and research workers to find what they require, and they soon learn to make use of the bibliographical knowledge of an efficient assistant as a quick and sure means of obtaining information.

Where these points are taken into consideration, the efforts of an interested staff will become apparent to the users

of the library, who, in their turn, will reap the benefit.

Apart from the foregoing, which may be termed the personal method, it is necessary for assistants to consider what mechanical appliances should be used in assisting readers. We are aware of the shelf guide systems in operation at Fulham, Croydon, and other modern libraries. To my mind there seems to exist an over-abundance of strict form in the language of notices. Would it not be possible to have more informal notices such as, "This is the catalogue; it is for your use: try to grasp its arrangement"; "Why not ask the assistant to reserve the book you want"? If an effort was made to introduce force into notices, I think they would be more likely to arrest the attention of the public, and such a style would add greatly to the effective display in departments.

THE BRANCHES.

MIDLAND BRANCH.

A meeting of the Midland Branch was held in Birmingham on 1st February, when thirty-two members were present.

During the afternoon a visit was made to the offices and works of the *Birmingham Gazette*, by kind arrangement of Thos. T. Stanley, Esq., managing editor. Members were conducted in parties of six through the establishment, and the various processes in newspaper production were explained. Tea was provided at the Y.M.C.A. Café, Dale End. The evening meeting was held at the Reference Library, by permission of Walter Powell, Esq., Chief Librarian. The minutes of the last meeting were read, confirmed and signed.

The Chairman notified the meeting of the purport of the revised recommendations of the Reconstruction Sub-Committee of the Council. Discussion was deferred until a later meeting. The Chairman announced that the Committee had decided to form preparatory classes for the Preliminary, Routine, Cataloguing, and Classification Examinations in May. Six candidates were nominated and duly elected to membership.

A paper was then read by Miss Maisie Atherton (Wolverhampton), "Francis Thompson: the man and his work." It was an exceedingly able paper, and was extremely well presented. Mr. G. L. Burton (Birmingham) followed with a paper, "Two Midland poets: Drinkwater and Masefield." Mr. Burton, a keen student of modern literature, dealt with the subject in a masterly manner. Both papers equalled in standard any ever read before the Branch, and contributed to a programme which has never been surpassed for enjoyment and interest. Votes of thanks were accorded the proprietors of the *Birmingham Gazette*, Walter Powell, Esq., and the readers of the papers. The good wishes of the Branch were extended to Miss J. Marklew, of the Birmingham Public Libraries staff, on her impending departure for Australia.

NEW MEMBERS.

Members: Mr. C. LINDSAY (Birmingham), Mr. G. E. FLACK (Birmingham University), Miss E. LAKE (Birmingham).

Associates: Miss C. MATTHEWS (Wolverhampton), Mr. L. OLDACRE (Birmingham University), Miss T. ROBLIN (Birmingham).

OBITUARY.

The Birmingham Public Libraries have lost a valued servant by the death, on March 20th, of Mr. Ernest John Packer, at the age of forty-seven.

Mr. Packer entered the Libraries as a junior assistant in 1891, and, during his thirty-one years' service, rose to the third position on the staff. For two years past, he has been Inspector of Lending Libraries. He leaves a widow and one daughter.

The chief characteristics of Mr. Packer were his unassuming quietness, his accuracy and precision, and his natural ability. For many years he had suffered from the complaint which caused his death, and his friends admired the cheerful and uncomplaining persistence with which he carried out his work under the most trying circumstances.

There is no doubt that Mr. Packer was at his post on many occasions when he ought to have been at home in the interests of his health. During the absence of the Deputy Chief Librarian on military service, his duties were undertaken by Mr. Packer, and he carried out his work in an entirely satisfactory manner.

The funeral took place on March 24th, at Erdington Parish Church, and was attended by the Chief Librarian (Mr. Walter Powell) and other members of the staff.

YORKSHIRE BRANCH.

Meetings were held at Ossett on Wednesday afternoon and evening, March 20th. This was the first visit of the Branch to the town, and those who made the journey came away with the conviction that this untilled ground had been made fruitful. Members were accorded a hearty welcome in the Council Chamber by Mr. Councillor Wm. Patterson (Chairman of the Library Committee). Councillor Patterson said there were no historical objects of interest to us in Ossett, neither could he conduct us over a library of much importance. It was a library, however, which he hoped would some day be well worthy of the town, and one which would become an asset to educational effort. He recognised the value of our work, and the great part a good library could play in the progress and welfare of the people. In some measure the Association helped to guide the thought of a considerable portion of the public, and its members had therefore some responsibility in the training of public and private life in the country. He believed we were fully alive to those responsibilities, and, as co-workers for the public good, he desired, on behalf of his Committee, to extend to us a very hearty welcome.

The President of the Branch (Mr. J. A. Butterfield, Bradford), who replied on behalf of the Branch, said he understood that Councillor Patterson was very keenly interested in the library movement, and he had hopes that something would be done at no distant date to bring the Ossett Public Library up to a good standard. Propaganda was one of the objects of our Association, and he trusted that one result of our visit to the town would be to help in making the local Council enthusiastic in library matters.

The afternoon meeting took the form of a conference between the Branch and the Ossett Education and Public Library Committee. The local authority was splendidly represented. The Honorary Secretary (Mr. W. Robertshaw) opened a discussion on "Library Development under the Public Libraries Act of 1919." He said that the Act had its defects, but by abolishing the rate limit it had removed the most paralyzing obstacle to the welfare and future growth of libraries, and by providing for their extension to rural districts under the authority of the County Councils it had proved a boon and a blessing. The ostensible and absolute purpose of the Act was to develop libraries. When one considered education in its broad connotation, in its effort to produce intelligent and right-minded citizens, one could not fail to see that the library was as truly educational as the school, and to recognise in the library an agency valuable in its work of supplementing the teaching given in the schools. Community organisations, of which the library was the most important, were playing a relatively larger part, day by day, in education. The library would perform the greatest service it had yet rendered to civilization in the democracies of the future. Though the library could not easily be a liability to the community, yet it required the utmost skill to make it highly helpful. It was the great office of the public library to reach the minds of all who could read, and to infuse into those minds uplifting and informing material.

Mr. Goulden (Huddersfield) said that a library should be a library and not a substitute, and where local authorities refused to grant the necessary money to carry it on efficiently the Committee should hand over its functions to the County Council. Mr. Strother (Leeds) said that libraries were a necessary adjunct to education, and if properly equipped their possibilities for good were illimitable. Mr. Maltby (Bradford) advocated the establishment of a museum side to every public library, even in the smallest of places. It aroused the curiosity, and by creating a desire for further information provided a stimulus for reading. The President referred to the great importance of specialised libraries, and of the value which the Commercial Library in Bradford had been to the business community.

Mr. Councillor Patterson referred to the remarks made in the discussion as to the importance of a local museum as an adjunct to the library. They had already the nucleus of a museum in the Town Hall, but the chief difficulty was to find suitable accommodation. A number of valuable objects had been received from a local gentleman, and he had no doubt that others would follow if arrangements for their accommodation could be made.

Members were entertained to tea by Councillor Patterson, who was accorded a hearty vote of thanks for his kindness.

The first item on the agenda of the evening meeting was the presentation of Library Association Certificates won by Yorkshire candidates at the examinations last May. Arrangements had been made for His Worship the Mayor of Ossett to present them, but Town

Council business prevented his attendance. The President of the Branch, who officiated in the place of the Mayor, made a spirited appeal for qualification by members. The recipients were Mr. A. Dean (Hull), Literary History; Miss F. Whitwell (Keighley), Classification; Mr. E. Allison (Hull), Cataloguing; and Miss M. Heap (Keighley), Library Routine.

Following this interesting function, Mr. E. Allison was elected to a seat on the Committee of the Branch in the room of Mr. F. T. Sleight, who was recently appointed Deputy Chief Librarian of Rochdale.

A paper on the "Value of a knowledge of Classification in general education," prepared by Mr. R. W. Parsons (Bradford), was, in his absence, read by Mr. A. Riley (Bradford). The author stated that the War revolutionised the life and industries of the people, and brought them to a fuller realisation of the urgent necessity of scientific management and the stoppage of waste. The application of these principles to librarianship was important. Intelligent classification was necessary to make a library of real value, and especially if a student was to be given reasonable facilities for the pursuit of his studies. The purpose of the paper was to illustrate two phases of the process of grouping facts and things, namely, classification which is carried only as far as is demanded by practical needs, and the more accurate grouping of objects which is the outcome of a desire for a fuller knowledge.

The paper was fully discussed, the Chairman of the Ossett Library Committee and the Secretary of Education (Mr. E. Lucas), both of whom continuously and vigorously champion the library cause in Ossett, taking part. The last-named gentleman, in a choice speech, expressed himself in agreement with the main arguments in the paper, and said that he had experienced no difficulties of a technical nature in appreciating the thesis. He thanked the Branch for bringing into the town such a spirit of enthusiasm; and sincerely hoped that the deliberations of the conference that day would prove fruitful to the library movement locally.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

ISLINGTON. PUBLIC LIBRARIES. Readers' Handbook: a guide to the libraries and an elementary handbook on the use of books. 16pp. 5 illus. 2 plans. Map.

One of the best and most readable little guides that we have seen for quite a long time. It is in four sections, the first describing the features of the Islington libraries and the many facilities offered to members, and the second explaining how to use the libraries to the best advantage, the arrangement of the books, catalogues, etc. The third section is particularly helpful, dealing as it does with the use of books, including the actual handling of them, their choice, the use of the indexes, etc. The pamphlet concludes with the official rules and regulations. The illustrations are of the Central and Branch libraries. The map of the borough forms a novel supplement, and is termed a "Municipal and educational map of . . . Islington, showing the principal public buildings, schools, open spaces, and the municipal wards."

APPOINTMENTS.

A. J. AVERY, Librarian, Gosta Green Branch Library, Birmingham, to be Librarian, King's Heath Branch Library, Birmingham.

F. J. PATRICK, Librarian, Birmingham Commercial Library, to be Inspector of Lending Libraries (in place of the late Mr. E. J. Packer).

H. WILSON, Reference Library, Birmingham, to be Librarian, Birmingham Commercial Library.

F. J. WINSPUR, Librarian, Birchfield Branch Library, to be Librarian, Gosta Green Branch Library, Birmingham.

NEW MEMBERS.

Associates: ARTHUR GARNETT (Camberwell), C. L. WOOD (Dartford).

Yorkshire Branch: Misses A. DAWSON (Bradford) and F. WHITWELL (Keighley).

Associates: Misses E. BREWER and E. M. WILLEY (Bradford), G. P. JACKSON (Bradford).

OBITUARY.

It is with deep regret that we have to announce the death of Mr. George Jackson, who, for 32 years, held the office of Librarian under the Barking Urban District Council. He was 80 years of age and passed away on Tuesday April 25th, at his residence, Ivy Cottage, James Street, Barking.

Mr. Jackson, with two other gentlemen, were the prime movers in obtaining the adoption of the Library Acts in Barking in 1888, and after the preliminary arrangements had been made he undertook voluntary work as Librarian for 12 months, and was then officially appointed Librarian, which position he held until June, 1921.

Mr. Jackson was also a member of the Essex County Council for the past 21 years, being mostly interested in health and education; a member of the Essex Archaeological Society, Essex Historical Society, and many other organisations, both County and local, all of which have felt the benefit of Mr. Jackson's energy.

He was compelled to resign from his position as Librarian last June owing to ill-health, and for the same reason he decided not to seek re-election on the Essex County Council at the last election.

Although he has been ailing for some months, the end came rather unexpectedly, and in consequence Barking loses one of the greatest educational workers in the town.